

PAM,  
AFRICA  
Slavery

# SLAVERY AND ITS SUBSTITUTES IN AFRICA.

*A Paper submitted to the Anti-Slavery Conference, held in Paris  
in August, 1900.*

BY

H. R. FOX BOURNE,

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London :

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## SLAVERY AND ITS SUBSTITUTES IN AFRICA.

Ten years have passed since the decisions arrived at by the Anti-Slavery Conference assembled at Brussels in November, 1889, were embodied in a General Act, although that Act was not signed and ratified until 1892. More than fifteen years, indeed, have passed since the policy agreed upon in detail at Brussels was laid down, as a principle, by the earlier International Conference which was held at Berlin in 1884 and 1885.

The Berlin  
and  
Brussels  
Conferences.

It was recorded in the Berlin Act of 1885, with reference to the portions of Africa dealt with in it, that "all the Powers exercising sovereign rights or influence in the aforesaid territories bind themselves to watch over the preservation of the native populations and the improvement of their moral and material conditions of life, and to co-operate in the suppression of slavery and especially of the slave trade [*toutes les Puissances exerçant des droits de souveraineté ou une influence dans les dits territoires s'engagent à veiller à la conservation des populations indigènes et à l'amélioration de leurs conditions morales et matérielles d'existence, et à concourir à la suppression de l'esclavage et surtout de la traite des noirs*]." And the several Powers taking part in the Brussels Act of 1892 declared themselves, in its preamble, to be "equally animated by the firm intention of putting an end to the crimes and devastations engendered by the traffic in African slaves, protecting effectively the aboriginal populations of Africa, and ensuring for that vast continent the benefits of peace and civilisation [*également animés de la ferme volonté de mettre un terme aux crimes et aux devastations qu'engendre la traite des esclaves Africains, de protéger efficacement les populations aborigènes de l'Afrique, et d'assurer à ce vaste continent les bienfaits de la paix et de la civilisation*]."

Their  
Abortive  
"Intentions."

We are bound to assume that these "firm intentions" had some existence, at the time, in the minds of even the most apathetic and obstructive among those who took part in the Berlin and Brussels Conferences, and none will deny that some of the Powers concerned have honestly and zealously endeavoured to give effect to them. For all that, the ten years' experience has been grievously disappointing. If much has been done towards stamping out the slave trade as it was carried on by Arab and other marauders in Central Africa, it is scarcely too much to



say that greater crimes and devastations have taken the place of those which have been to some extent suppressed, and that most of the natives whom it was proposed to "protect" have been more hurt than helped thereby. There is force in the cynical remark of M. le Baron E. de Mandat-Grancey in his latest travel book, *Au Congo* : "J' ai toujours soutenu que la race nègre qui a résisté trois cents ans de traite serait détruite par cinquante ans de philanthropie."

The evidence of more sedate travellers and authorities proves conclusively that the Berlin and Brussels Conferences, if they are not directly responsible for many evils for which philanthropic motives and excuses are falsely alleged, have encouraged their growth, and that there ought to be no delay in, as far as possible, correcting their faults and supplying their omissions. The faults and omissions are not limited to proposals as regards questions connected with slavery and the slave trade in Africa ; but these questions alone will be touched upon in the present paper.

In spite of all the widening, since 1885, of our knowledge in Europe as to the conditions of life among African savages before we interfered with them, there is still much ignorance or confusion respecting the institution of slavery and its concomitants in different parts of the continent.

**Slavery in  
Africa.**

The slavery that Europeans have undertaken to abolish in Africa has there existed from prehistoric times. It may be likened to the serfdom which was an integral part of the feudal system, and which gave place to other forms of bondage as a result of the industrial and commercial developments of modern days. Of much older date than the Arab conquests of the seventh and following centuries, it had its origin in the savage wars that were the rule among all barbarous communities of remote times. Tribal ambitions and tribal jealousies furnished constant inducement to sanguinary quarrels, the survivors of which, on the beaten side, became the property of their captors. As such, they were used as drudges in any way convenient to their masters, and, war being the principal masculine occupation, more of them were employed as slave-soldiers than in such rude crafts and trades as were followed in those ages. In any case, unless they either contrived to escape or were soon killed off for insubordination, they had opportunities of exercising whatever skill they possessed and of using it largely to their own advantage. Albeit slaves themselves, they could become not only masters of other slaves, but, as is common at the present time, chiefs or petty kings over groups willing or compelled to recognise them as leaders. All the conditions of life among the



pagan savages of Africa were, of course, and still are, so far as they continue, repulsive to civilised notions, and especially revolting were the cannibal tastes and the need of victims for human sacrifices that were great provocatives of fighting habits and helped to keep down the slave population. But slavery was not the worst of those conditions of life, and some improvements in it were brought about by the Arab conquests that revolutionised every part of Africa to which they extended. The religious persecutions incident to those conquests cannot be justified, and there is much oppression of the aboriginal communities subject to the dominant classes in such Mohammedan empires as have been set up and carried on to the present day. Even the sufferers by this oppression, however, are in happier state than most of the aborigines still in their original savagery and, now that Arab slave-trading has been to a large extent put down, at the mercy of European adventurers.

The ideal of social reformers in modern Europe is that every individual shall be his own master, that the absolute freedom of all alike shall be limited only by their subjection to equitable and reasonable laws for the common good—laws imposing no more restraints, and conferring no fewer advantages, upon the poor and the low-born than upon persons more favoured in birth or fortune. But that ideal has not yet been attained in Europe, and efforts to set up a pretence of it in uncivilised regions are likely, if not certain, to aggravate, instead of lessening, the evils complained of, or to substitute new and greater evils for the old. As regards the domestic slavery which is the basis of family life throughout most of Africa, if not also of its social and political life, its abolition must, of course, be hoped for and aimed at by all who are truly and wisely “concerned as to the means of furthering the moral and material well-being of the native populations.” But premature and ill-advised attempts to abolish it before the people themselves are ready for the change, and unless the professed reformers have some better arrangement put in its place, can lead to nothing but mischief. There is lamentable and overwhelming evidence that it has already done so.

**The African  
Slave Trade.**

There is better warrant for European interference with the abuses of African slavery than for interference with African slavery itself, and such interference, if judicious, should be much easier and more advantageous. There, must, of course, have been much cruel slave-raiding by rival chiefs and tribes of pagan negroes through centuries before it began to be more systematically conducted by Mohammedan Arabs. And we know that through the middle ages there was a trade in slaves brought from the central



districts to the eastern and northern coasts, for conveyance to Mohammedan territories in Asia and Europe, and, in lesser numbers, to Christian territories in the latter continent, as well as for use in the luxurious settlements of the invaders in Egypt, Tripoli, Algiers, Morocco, and elsewhere. But the African slave trade was comparatively small, and not grossly offensive, until new channels were found for it in the supply of human chattel for work in the sugar plantations, cotton fields, and so forth, in the Americas, the West Indies, and other regions. The Christian nations of Europe and their offshoots are responsible for the worst horrors of the traffic, for most of the "crimes and devastations" that the Brussels Conference of 1890 had a "firm intention of putting an end to," and it is but a small part of our duty to make such reparation as we can for the wrong—doing of our forefathers. The suppression of the slave trade, in which Denmark had the honour of leading the way in 1792, and which was formally approved by all the parties to the Congress of Vienna in 1815, has been gradually and almost completely brought about on the western and southern sides of Africa, and must be persisted in until it has been accomplished on its eastern and northern sides. The provisions of the Brussels General Act of 1892 for stamping out the evil at its sources in the interior, moreover, were by no means too drastic or comprehensive, and they call, in some respects, for more vigorous enforcement than they have as yet received. At the same time, experience has proved that they afford many openings for abuse. More than that, they have furnished excuses for sins of commission, as well as for sins of omission. These are scandals—nay, they are crimes, at least as heinous as those which the Brussels General Act was intended to put a stop to; and it behoves us to do all in our power to put matters right with the least possible delay.

**The Anti-Slavery Provisions of 1892.**

**Their Defective Working.**

Although slavery has been ostensibly abandoned and forbidden by all the Christian nations, it has been revived, and is now being rapidly extended, under new and specious names, and in forms more pernicious and reprehensible than the old. Although great efforts and great pretences have been made to abolish the slave trade, some of the efforts being as praiseworthy and serviceable as others have been culpable and detrimental, and many of the pretences being, perhaps, attributable rather to ignorance or self-deception than to forethought or malevolence, the vices that led to it and issued from it are being reproduced in even worse shapes and with heavier disaster to their victims than ever.



The Congo  
State's  
Respon-  
sibilities.

All the European Powers holding territory in Africa pledged themselves, as signatories of the Brussels General Act, to join in the crusade against slave raiding and the traffic in captured slaves, as well as not to tolerate slavery within their own dominions, and each of them has done much, or something, in fulfilment of the promise. But, as the principal hunting-grounds for slaves were within the area assigned to the Congo Free State, and as the Sovereign of that State declared himself eager to take a leading part in the work, his offer was accepted by the other Powers, and, in consideration of the heavy expenses that would thus have to be incurred, the stipulation of the Berlin General Act that no import or transit duties should be levied within the Conventional Basin of the Congo was so far rescinded that the Congo Free State was allowed to levy duties not exceeding ten per cent. *ad valorem* on all goods imported into it. In examining the effect of the Brussels General Act on African slavery, therefore, it is necessary to take particular account of the Congo State's action and its results.

Baron  
Dhanis's  
Expeditions.

That action, though previously prepared for, may be said to have started with the expedition led by Captain (now Baron) Dhanis in 1881 against Rumaliza, the so-called Arab sultan of Ujiji, one of the most powerful of the lieutenants or rivals of Tippu Tib, the great Zanzibar merchant who had since 1876 been attempting to build up a new Central African empire, besides carrying on an enormous trade in slaves and ivory. M. Dhanis, after three years of campaigning, defeated Rumaliza and was able to report that he had crushed out Arab slave-raiding in the Congo State by the slaughter of nearly all who had taken part in it. But the continuous fighting that, in one or other part of the State's territory, has since been going on with the Manyema and other natives who were supposed to have been humanely rescued from Arab oppressions shows that the oppressions of their new masters have been, to say the least, as cruel and as galling.

Dr. Hinde, an Englishman who served in M. Dhanis's great expedition, and whose testimony is confirmed by the official reports of M. Dhanis himself, stated in 1895, "Despite their slave-raiding propensities during the forty years of their domination, the Arabs had converted the Manyema and Batetela country into one of the most prosperous in Central Africa." Of Nyangwe he said: "This town, until lately one of the greatest markets in Africa, has ceased to exist, and its site, when I last saw it, was occupied by a single house." Again, "Kasongo, a more recent though a still larger centre, with perhaps 60,000 inhabitants, has also been swept away."



**The Congo  
State's  
Arrange-  
ments.**

The authorities of the Congo Free State make no secret as to the nature of the rule they seek to establish over natives for whose "preservation" and "the improvement of whose moral and material conditions of life" they have made themselves responsible, although they deny that the enforcement of this rule is attended by as many "crimes and devastations" as are alleged, and that the evils complained of are necessary results of the administrative system they have set up.

The system is clearly and authoritatively described by M. F. Cattier in his learned work, "*Droit et Administration de l'État Indépendant du Congo*." It is there pointed out that among the specified duties of the Commissaries and their assistants in the fifteen districts into which the territories of the State are divided are "the suppression of the slave trade, the moral and intellectual elevation of the natives, the improvement of their conditions of life, and the recruiting of the army [*la répression de la traite, le relèvement moral et intellectuel des indigènes, l'amélioration de leurs conditions d'existence, et le recrutement de la force publique*];" and that the recognised and salaried native chiefs, with whom the Commissaries are to co-operate in governing the people, are to be responsible for "annual levies in kind to be furnished by each village [*prestations annuelles en nature à fournir par chaque village*]," and also for the supply of "a fixed number of soldiers or of forced labourers [*un nombre déterminé de soldats ou de travailleurs (corvées)*]." The conditions under which the "levies in kind," the recruits for the army, and the forced labour are procured, render impossible the moral, intellectual or material improvement of the natives' position, and, instead of putting an end to the slave trade, merely substitute new for old forms of slavery.

**Military  
Service.**

The Congo State army, with a few white officers at its head, comprises two classes, "volunteers" and militia. The word "volunteer," as M. Cattier explains, is not exact. "It necessarily supposes a voluntary act on the part of the chief to whose tribe the person engaged belongs; but it does not necessarily suppose a free act on the part of the latter [*Il suppose nécessairement un acte volontaire de la part du chef de la tribu à laquelle appartient l'engagé, mais il ne suppose pas nécessairement un acte libre chez ce dernier*]." As a matter of fact, the volunteers are the abject slaves of the chiefs who, themselves under compulsion, or for their own gain, supply them for the State's use. The militia, levied from time to time by the District Commissaries through the native chiefs, in such numbers as the Governor General may appoint, are also slaves, but somewhat more under European control when they do not, as has several times happened, join the volunteers in mutiny.



**Industrial  
Service.**

The original term of service prescribed for the militia was seven years; but in 1898 it was lengthened to twelve in order that a reserve force might be formed which should also be a body of "agriculteurs soldats." Meanwhile the policy of exacting labour in other capacities as well as military service has been developed. The Berlin General Act stipulated that "no monopoly or privilege of any kind in matters of trade [*ni monopole ni privilège d'aucune espèce en matière commerciale*]" shall be allowed in the territory. As far back as 1887 the Congo State, in defiance of that stipulation began to grant privileges and monopolies to commercial companies for obtaining rubber and other articles, and to appropriate to itself "des terres domaniales," over the ivory and other wealth of which it claimed exclusive possession. In twelve years the illegal arrangement has grown to such an extent that the natives have been practically deprived of all share in the ownership of their land or its waters, and are left or forced to keep alive as best they can by toiling for the State itself or for the companies licensed by it. Thus slavery has been re-established or maintained in forms even more liable to abuse than those ostensibly abolished, seeing that the white man's slave can expect from his master none of the consideration generally accorded by black slave-owners, from motives of economy if for no higher reason, to their human property.

**Profession  
and Practice  
in the  
Congo.**

In 1889, in a document prepared by the Congo Government for the guidance of the Brussels Conference, it was averred that "Slavery, even domestic, cannot be officially recognised. Indeed, it is not possible for a single man in the Congo to be subject to another, since every attempt on individual liberty is accounted an offence punishable by the articles of the penal code. He who, by violence, tricks or threats, removes or causes to be removed, arbitrarily arrests or causes to be arrested, detains or causes to be detained any person whatever, is punished; he who disposes of any persons whatever by selling them as slaves is punished. By these general arrangements the traffic, the transport, the detention of individuals as slaves falls under the arm of the penal law [*L'esclavage, même domestique, ne saurait être reconnu officiellement. En effet, il n'est pas possible qu'un homme au Congo soit assujéti à un autre, puisque toute atteinte à la liberté individuelle est réputée un délit punissable par les articles du code pénal. Est puni celui qui, par violences, ruses ou menaces, a enlevé ou fait enlever, arrêté ou fait arrêter arbitrairement, détenu ou fait déténer une personne quelconque; est puni celui qui dispose de personnes quelconques pour les vendre comme esclaves. De par ces dispositions générales, le trafic, le transport, le detention d'individus comme esclaves tombent sous le coup de la loi pénale*]."

Before those specious assertions were made the Congo State had, in November, 1888, accorded "une protection spéciale aux noirs," by a decree allowing blacks to be bound over for seven years' service to any white masters who satisfied the authorities that the blacks were willing parties to the conditions imposed upon them, and another decree had, in March, 1889, professed "réprimer des abus" by requiring trading companies and others to take out a licence for each native engaged by them, or, if the engagement was made through a "capita," or headman, for each capita. The capitas being notoriously sub-contractors in the procuring of forced labour, the only abuse that the second decree could repress was the withholding from the State of the revenue from licenses expected by it.

Although the decrees of 1888 and 1889 for the "special protection of blacks" and "repression of abuses," by allowing nothing but absolutely voluntary service to be obtained from natives, have not been repealed, and although it is still one of the pious opinions of the Congo Government that "slavery, even domestic, cannot be officially recognised," there is no longer any attempt to deny that forced labour is everywhere resorted to, alike by State officials, by commercial companies, and by all others, except a few missionaries. It is freely acknowledged and applauded, even by missionaries and others who consider themselves philanthropists, on the ground that compulsion is necessary in teaching blacks what is called "the dignity of labour."

In November, 1893, before the Dhanis expedition, avowedly for the extinction of the slave trade, was over, another decree was issued, authorising the Commandant-General to raise, in the Manyema district, "by means of levies, part of the resources necessary to cover the extraordinary expenses incurred in suppressing the Arab revolt [*au moyen de prestations, une partie des ressources nécessaires pour couvrir les dépenses extraordinaires occasionnées par la suppression de la révolte des Arabes*]," as the Arabs' resistance of attacks upon them was called. "These levies," it was appointed, "shall be, as far as possible, in proportion to the population placed under the authority of each local chief. The levies of labour shall be used in the establishment of plantations, the cultivation of the rubber plant, and the construction of works of public utility [*Ces prestations serviront, autant que possible, proportionnelles à la population placée sous l'autorité du chef habitant chaque localité. Les prestations de travail seront utilisées à l'établissement de plantations, à la replantation de la liane à cavoutchouc, et à la construction de travaux d'utilité publique*]." "This system," M. Cattier truly remarks, "is of a sort to legalise all spoliations and acts of injustice. It has the essential



vice of offering no guarantee of moderation and justice. It places native chiefs at the mercy of District Chiefs and functionaries who have a personal interest in imposing the heaviest levies and in rigorously exacting payment [*Ce système est de nature à légitimer toutes les spoliations et les injustices. Il a le vice essentiel de ne présenter aucune garantie de modération et de justice. Il met les chefs indigènes à la merci de chefs de district et de fonctionnaires qui ont un intérêt personnel à imposer les prestations les plus lourdes et à en exiger le payement avec rigueur*].” This vicious system, however, is now the rule.

In order to secure for the Congo State, and the commercial associations chartered by it, the rubber and other commodities with which they desire to enrich themselves, the natives are ruthlessly persecuted. The “force publique,” and the “agriculteurs soldats” and others subordinate to it, when not employed on military expeditions, are used as overseers of what are virtually slave-gangs or as collectors of “tribute” from the luckless aborigines, whose right to live in their own country, without paying heavily for the privilege, is denied to them. Much of the latter work is done by the so-called “volunteers,” who, most of them being cannibals led by cannibal chiefs, are mainly recompensed for their services by being allowed to feast on the bodies of the victims shot down for not providing the “tribute” demanded from them. Of the way in which these “volunteers” perform the congenial tasks assigned to them startling and indisputable evidence has lately been furnished by the report of United States Presbyterian missionaries in the Kasai district as to atrocities committed in September, 1899. More recent and more startling are the disclosures as to proceedings for which white men are directly responsible under the control of the Société Anversoise au Commerce au Congo, in the Mongala district, much nearer to the centre of government.

With reference to such occurrences, of which a long and ghastly list could be furnished, although it is probable that the European public is only made acquainted with a few and the most conspicuous of them, it is persistently asserted, on behalf of the Congo Government, that their nature and extent are exaggerated by its critics, and that its agents in Africa are sufficiently careful to punish all who are proved to be wrongdoers. The assertions would have more weight if there were not such manifest efforts on the part of the authorities to suppress inquiries, to withhold official information, and to screen incriminated officials, and if so many of the decrees of the Congo State, published in its *Bulletin Officiel*, were not so framed as to tolerate, if not to actually encourage, the evils complained of.

In any review of events consequent on the proposals of the Berlin and Brussels Conferences for abolishing slavery and improving the condition of natives in Africa, it is necessary that particular attention should be called to the conduct of affairs in the Congo Free State. That State was avowedly started as a great and exclusively philanthropic undertaking. As such, its formation was sanctioned by the Powers represented at the Berlin Conference, one of whose principal duties was the settlement of details as to the functions and limitations marked out for it by international agreement. As such, it sought and obtained from the Brussels Conference special powers and privileges as the suppressor of the slave trade and the benefactor of Central African natives. It is, in these respects, a fiduciary of the several Powers that signed the Berlin and Brussels General Acts; to each and all of whom it is responsible, and who are, each and all, responsible for any evils resulting from its disregard of obligations and breach of the trust placed in it by them.

But each of the other European Powers engaged in the partition and appropriation of Africa has its own faults to answer for. It may be sufficient, on this occasion, for an English onlooker to do no more than respectfully invite French, German, Italian, Portugese, and other philanthropists to do their utmost, in their several countries, towards procuring much better observance of the humane professions of the Berlin and Brussels Conferences than has hitherto occurred, and towards rooting out and preventing recrudescence of the evils that those Conferences aimed at overcoming. Englishmen have their own nation's offences to be ashamed of and to protest against; and of these it will be most proper that use should be made in support of the more general remarks that follow.

**Spurious Philanthropy.** Within the past ten or twenty years there appears to have been lamentable deterioration in public opinion as regards some, at any rate, of our obligations to our fellow-creatures. The very fact of International Conferences having been convened in 1884 and 1889 may seem to contradict this statement. But it is not unfair to suggest that both Conferences were brought about quite as much by the desire of their promoters to obtain political advantages for themselves in Africa, as by zeal for the welfare of African natives; and there can be no doubt that in the result the former has been a much stronger motive than the latter. With conscious or unconscious hypocrisy, the welfare of African natives has by most of us been used mainly as an excuse for turning to our own account both them and the lands they occupy.



Is it not so, to a large extent, in our handling of slavery and the slave trade? We have done much to stop the stealing of blacks in the African interior for sale in the slave-markets on the coast, and we have done something to repress the sort of slavery that has been common from distant times in nearly every part of Africa. But we are increasing, instead of lessening, our appliances for bringing under bondage to ourselves, a bondage often more irksome to them than the older slavery, those whom we take credit for having rescued.

Greatly as it is to be desired that slavery under pagan and Mohammedan masters should be abolished, no benefit, nothing but fresh injury, can be looked for from any change that merely prepares the way for thralldom all the more galling to its victims because it is alien to their present habits and customs, and none the less galling because it is called by other names than that of slavery, and upheld by white instead of black oppressors. That is the growing evil against which it behoves us to protest,

Whatever warrant there may be, if there is any, for the partition of nearly the whole of Africa into areas marked out as the possessions of the several European Powers that have satisfied themselves and one another as to their right of ownership, the appropriation is utterly without excuse unless it is distinctly beneficial to the earlier and present occupants of the regions so appropriated. It is no apology for wrong-doers calling themselves Christians and civilised that the wrongs they do are in continuation or imitation of the policy of Moslem bigots or savage pagans. Nor can their wrong-doing be justified on the plea that, in bringing political advantage or commercial profit to the white aggressors, it ought also to be of service to the blacks who are interfered with.

**British  
Examples.**

No more valid excuses have been offered, however, for—cite instances from British records alone—such proceedings as the overthrow of the followers of the Mahdi in the Eastern Sudan, with auxiliary operations in Uganda and elsewhere, and the numerous little wars that have led up to the measures now on foot for establishing effective control over the district known as Nigeria and other portions of the Western Sudan. In both these cases the repression of slavery and the slave trade has been put forward as a prominent reason for all the bloodshed that has been caused, and much of the fighting has been done by native warriors holding a position closely resembling that of the slave armies of the savage nations attacked by us. In other parts of Africa, as in the district known as Rhodesia, there has been less pretence of philanthropy, and

only British troops have been employed in the work of conquest. But, in nearly every case, the true motive has been the same—a desire for such mastery over the inhabitants of the district as will shift their bondage from black to white control, and perpetuate or aggravate their slavery without allowing it to be called by that name.

**Veiled  
Slavery.**

It is asserted by apologists for the veiled slavery which is now common in most of the Europeanised parts of Africa that no employment of labour can be regarded as slavery so long as the labour is contracted for and paid for. This is poor quibbling. No contract is binding in equity unless both parties to it clearly understand its nature and are as free to reject as to accept it. Mere payment, at whatever rate and of whatever kind, is no recompense for any service rendered unless the rendering has been voluntary. The cruellest slave-driver, where slavery exists without subterfuge, will tell you that the food and shelter he provides for his slave are equivalent to wages, and that the promises he extorts from his slave under fear of the lash satisfy the conditions of a contract. If there is any honesty in our professed desire to put an end to slavery in Africa, we must condemn and abandon all the systems of forced labour, and all the devices for procuring it, which are now tolerated by the Governments of Great Britain, France, Germany, and other European nations, as well as by the Congo Free State.

Whether the natives of Africa can ever be raised to a position of social equality with the white men who have intruded upon them, and assumed authority over them, is a question that need not be here discussed. It may be to the ultimate advantage of the blacks, as well as of their white masters, that they should be subjected to European rule and taught to turn to good account the hitherto undeveloped resources of their continent. But none who really hold the humane views publicly professed by the Berlin and Brussels Conferences can sanction any rule or any teaching that is tyrannical. The sole justification for our exploitation of Africa, as of other uncivilised parts of the world, is that it shall, not merely aim at, but also result in the benefitting of the native populations no less than of ourselves. If we appropriate some of the land of which the natives have more than they can use, we must rob them of none that they require; and if, while showing them how to utilise what is left for them, we seek their help in utilising the portion we have taken from them, our employment of them must be as free men, not as slaves under any euphemisms.

The conditions of civilised life render it necessary that natives availing themselves of its privileges should also submit to its obligations.



They must conform to white men's laws if they associate with white men, and in doing so they must endure what may seem to them privations, as well as enjoy what seem to them benefits. They must pay rents and taxes, and earn money enough with which to do that and all else which is equitably required of them. But no burdens should be imposed upon them that are not shared by their white neighbours, and none are needed to make them eager and efficient wage earners. Any compulsion put upon them that is not common to all, anything that places them in servile relations with the dominant class of the community, is in the nature of slavery.

**Forced  
Labour.**

Just as, in the absence or dearth of the coins which represent money among us, uncivilised people have to do their buying and selling by barter, so in payment of taxes or other claims upon them it is often convenient or inevitable that the medium employed should be manual service. Hence has arisen the *corvée*, or labour-tax, which exists in various forms. Legitimate as an equivalent from black subjects of taxes paid in coin by white subjects, the expedient is liable to abuse, and it is abused whenever it is taken advantage of in laying upon blacks burdens disproportionate to those to which whites are exposed. The abuse is greatest where the service of members of a tribe is forcibly procured through their chief by representatives either of the State or of the chartered companies or individuals to whom it is now the fashion for States to delegate many of their administrative functions. By such methods, and their varieties are numerous, the slavery in Africa which Europeans have undertaken to suppress is being superseded by slavery in veiled forms, which may be as obnoxious as the old, or worse, and in which the slave-drivers are Europeans.

**Servile  
Armies.**

And this is not only the case as regards the procuring of forced labour for industrial pursuits and the civilian work of government. The evil is not less reprehensible and is more alarming in the case of the black warriors now employed by all the European Powers in their African encroachments. This practice is not a novelty or limited to Africa. In all remote and tropical regions it is scarcely possible for extensive wars to be waged against savages without the assistance of other savages. There are precedents, more than two thousand years old, for this policy, and without it the British Empire in India and other great despotisms, benevolent or otherwise, could scarcely have been built up. But in Africa there are special dangers to be taken account of, and special opportunities for the growth of monstrous evils which can scarcely fail to be in the end ruinous to those who have encouraged them. No other European Power is likely

to err so grievously in this respect as the Congo State has done. Yet there is enough for humane men and women to deplore and resent in the arrangements by which native troops more or less disciplined, and native mercenaries disciplined in nothing but murder, overcame the so-called dervishes of the Eastern Sudan, and by which much kindred work has been done and is still being done under British and other direction elsewhere. Who can be sure that, as soon as the African natives whom Europeans are arming and training in so many thousands are tired of slaughtering the other natives against whom they are sent, and as soon as they consider themselves strong enough to turn against their employers, they will not make use of the weapons and training given to them in desperate efforts to deliver their land from European rule?

Self-interest, no less than justice and humanity, should lead the nations of Europe to give effect to their pious resolutions and to fulfil their pledges at the Berlin and Brussels Conferences, and on other occasions, as regards rescuing the natives of Africa from the evils of slavery and the slave trade, and "ensuring for that vast continent the benefits of peace and civilisation."







# THE Aborigines Protection Society.

("AB UNO SANGUINE.")

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SMITHS', Printers, 23-32, Hutton Street, E.C., and Fleet Works, St. Albans.